

***Selection of Alternative
and
Finding of No Significant Impact***

***Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge
Comprehensive Management Plan
Kossuth County, Iowa***

An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to publicly disclose the possible environmental consequences that implementation of the Union Slough Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) could have on the quality of the physical, biological, and human environment, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The EA presented and evaluated two alternatives, a “No Action” alternative (maintain the status quo) and an “Action” alternative (implement the Union Slough CMP).

The alternative selected for implementation is ***Alternative 2***, implement the Union Slough CMP and establish Refuge management direction pursuant to the goals, objectives, and strategies contained in the CMP.

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and supporting EA will be made available to the public for 30 days from the date below. During this 30-day period the FONSI will not be final, nor will the Service implement the selected alternative. A final decision will be made on whether to carry out the alternative selected at the conclusion of the 30-day period.

Restoring, preserving, and managing additional upland, wetland, and riparian habitats by the Service as additions to the Refuge will provide important habitat for threatened and endangered species, waterfowl and other migratory birds, native resident flora and fauna, and provide the public with additional wildlife-dependent recreation and education opportunities. Further, promoting beneficial conservation practices to sensitive areas within the Refuge watershed (such as erosion-prone, riparian, and wetland areas) will improve water quality within the Refuge, increase the amount and diversity of habitat available for dependent species, and preserve the Refuge for the continuing benefit of the American people.

For reasons presented on the following page and based on an evaluation of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment, we have determined that alternative 2 is not a major federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment, within the meaning of Section 102 (2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Reasons:

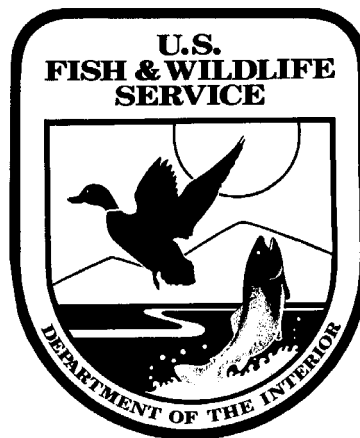
1. Economic impacts will be negligible compared to the overall economic base of the county.
2. Acquisition of lands would be from willing sellers only
3. Where Service fee-title acquisitions are concerned, annual revenue sharing payments will be made to the county to help off-set potential impacts to the tax base.
4. Cultural resource inventory surveys are planned to insure protection of archeological, historical, and architectural resources.
5. This action will not have an adverse impact on threatened or endangered species.
6. Drainage networks or floodplains will not be affected.

Supporting References:

Environmental Assessment
Comprehensive Management Plan

/s/ William Hartwig
Regional Director

12/23/1996
Date



Regional Director
Great Lakes - Big Rivers Region
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